

What is claimed is:

- [c1]** 1. A method of recording content, comprising:
displaying a parameter menu of selectable parameters to be used for recording current or future viewed content; and
selecting at least one parameter from the parameter menu via a user interface in order to effect a recording operation for the content.
- [c2]** 2. The method of claim 1, wherein said parameter menu is mutually exclusive of any displayed content of an electronic program guide (EPG).
- [c3]** 3. The method of claim 1, wherein said parameter menu is displayed as part of any displayed content of an electronic program guide (EPG).
- [c4]** 4. The method of claim 1, wherein said parameters include at least one of a date of program, a time of program, and a desired channel.
- [c5]** 5. The method of claim 4, further comprising displaying electronic program guide (EPG) content so as to identify at least one of a program to be recorded, actors in programs listed on said displayed menu, alternate audio, other showings on said displayed menu, and other episodes of a selectable program on said menu, wherein said user interface is selected from at least one of a graphical user interface (GUI) at a set-top box (STB), a remote control accessing the STB, or function buttons on the set-top box (STB).
- [c6]** 6. The method of claim 5, further comprising manipulating said displayed EPG data to check for time conflicts between programs and to select alternate tuners for the STB.
- [c7]** 7. The method of claim 5, wherein currently viewed content is paused when the EPG is displayed.

[c8] 8. A method of recording content with a set top box (STB) while viewing current content received from a communication system, comprising the steps of:

issuing a first command to immediately record currently viewed content; said command sent from a user-interface to a processor in the STB; and

recording said currently viewed content on a mass storage device until a second command to stop recording is received by the processor, until said mass storage device runs out of storable space, or until the currently viewed content ends.

[c9] 9. The method of claim 8, wherein said first and second commands are one-touch enabled features on a suitable user-interface such as a remote control, graphical user interface (GUI), or button on the STB.

[c10] 10. The method of claim 8, wherein said first and second commands may be issued from a remote location.

[c11] 11. The method of claim 8, wherein said currently viewed content can be recorded from a designated point forward, or from the beginning of the program.

[c12] 12. A method of recording content, comprising the steps of: displaying a preview channel of selectable content; selecting at least one of the selectable content on the preview channel; and

recording said selected content once the selected content has been broadcast in its entirety.

[c13] 13. The method of claim 12, wherein said selectable content on said preview channel represents a broadcast trailer of a full-featured broadcast of said selectable content.

[c14] 14. The method of claim 12, wherein said selectable content on said preview channel represents a website trailer of a full-featured broadcast of said selectable content, the website being programmed in order to enable the user to activate program recording.

[c15] 15. The method of claim 12, wherein said step of selecting includes selecting said content with a user-interface, said user-interface sending instructions to the STB to display a pop-up menu of selectable content.

[c16] 16. The method of claim 15, wherein said user interface further enables the display of pop-up menus for recording conflict identification, finding alternate times and handling pay-per-view issues.

[c17] 17. The method of claim 13, further comprising embedding triggers and other information in said broadcast trailer that inform the STB of the content to record.

[c18] 18. A method of recording content with a set-top box (STB), comprising:

displaying a menu of selectable recorded programs;
selecting ones of the displayed programs for editing operations;
editing at least a part of the material in a selected programming in order to create a customized program for storage.

[c19] 19. The method of claim 18, wherein said editing includes concatenation, truncation, frame capture, audio and video remix operations.

[c20] 20. The method of claim 18, wherein said customized program is a video greeting card or outgoing message.

[c21] 21. A method of recording content with a set-top box (STB), comprising:

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caching live content continuously up until a point where a mass storage device operatively connected to the STB is full; and thereafter displaying a menu of selectable cached content to be converted to permanently recorded content on the mass storage device.

[c22] 22. The method of claim 21, wherein live content is viewable after changing channels, while the previously viewed content is being cached for potential permanent storage.

[c23] 23 The method of claim 21, wherein said step of caching is user-selectable or automatically set as a default feature in the STB.

[c24] 24. The method of claim 21, wherein the user can display an archived menu of cached live content from a specified period of time.

[c25] 25. A method of recording content in a communication system receiving at least two channel signals, comprising:
recording content of a first channel, and
viewing content on a second channel, wherein the second channel is being viewed while the first channel is being recorded.

[c26] 26. The method of claim 25, wherein said at least two channel signals are received by a set top box, said STB performing simultaneous data decrypting and transport processing of said at least two channel signals.

[c27] 27. The method of claim 25, wherein the STB is configured to simultaneously pause received live content on both channels.

[c28] 28. The method of claim 25, wherein the STB is configured to simultaneously record received live content on both channels.

[c29] 29. The method of claim 25, wherein the STB is configured to simultaneously record or pause received live content on N channels, where N is the number of tuned and demodulated channels received by the STB.

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[c30] 30. A method of retrieving recorded content in a set-top box (STB), that has been designated as deletable, comprising:

displaying a menu of recorded programs that the user has designated as deletable from a mass storage device; and

selecting desired programs on said menu for un-deletion, wherein said selected programs are un-deleted so long as said mass storage device is not full.

[c31] 31. The method of claim 30, further comprising selecting desired programs on said menu for permanent deletion from the mass storage device.

[c32] 32. A method of creating a customized play list of content, comprising:

displaying a first menu of selectable content

selecting content on said first menu;

displaying a second menu; and

adding said selected programs to said second menu.

[c33] 33. The method of claim 32, wherein said first menu is an electronic program guide and said second menu is a stored archive of customized play lists which may be accessed and modified by a user with the selected content.

[c34] 34. The method of claim 32, wherein said second menu is the customized play list, and displays selected items that are user configurable.

[c35] 35. A method of looping recorded content in a set-top box (STB), comprising:

marking a start point and an end point of currently viewed content; and

subjecting the marked data to a looping operation so that it is continually looped on a display device operatively connected to the STB.

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[c36] 36. The method of claim 35, wherein said looping operation may be effected via a menu-driven display or via a suitable user-interface.

[c37] 37. The method of claim 35, wherein the marked data is real-time data or trick mode data.

[c38] 38. A method of marking desired points in a program for viewing, comprising:

inserting a marker at a point in currently viewed content, said marker representing a bookmark snippet of the content; and

storing the bookmark, wherein a user may display the bookmark via a user interface.

[c39] 39. The method of claim 38, wherein the user can view other programming and jump back to the bookmarked content and resume viewing.

[c40] 40. The method of claim 38, wherein the user annotates the bookmarks.

[c41] 41. The method of claim 38, further comprising displaying a menu of stored bookmarks.

[c42] 42. The method of claim 38, wherein said currently viewed content is live, recorded or cached programming.

[c43] 43. A digital video recording (DVR) apparatus in a communication system comprising:

a memory for storing a plurality of selectable parameters related to recording of content in the DVR apparatus;

a processor for displaying a menu of said selectable parameters; and

a user interface device for selecting at least one parameter from the menu in order to effect a recording operation for the content.

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[c44] 44. The DVR apparatus of claim 43, wherein said user-interface is selected from the group comprising a remote control, graphical user interface (GUI), function button on the DVR, external keyboard or an external personal computer (PC) operatively connected to the DVR.

[c45] 45. The DVR apparatus of claim 43, wherein one of the selectable parameters is a disk gas gage feature indicating how much of a mass storage device operatively connected to the DVR is consumed by recorded material.

[c46] 46. The DVR apparatus of claim 45, wherein said disk gas gage provides a percent of storage available of remaining in real-time.

[c47] 47. The DVR apparatus of claim 43, wherein one of the selectable parameters is a notification indicating the approximate minutes of recording time still available while recording is in progress.

[c48] 48. The DVR apparatus of claim 47, said notification embodied as an out-of-disk space alert feature which is automatically displayed when the remaining available recording time equals a predetermined default value.

[c49] 49. The DVR apparatus of claim 48, wherein said out-of-disk space alert feature is configured to have both audio and video components.